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ABSTRACT

This book serves as a guide for overcoming the challenge of improving schools. It provides a comprehensive view of issues related to serious school reform and describes appropriate attitudes, concepts, and tools needed to rethink and redesign American education. A 5-year study of 10 schools in the Coalition of Essential Schools already involved in school reform revealed a necessity to redesign 3 critical areas of the school. These involve altering the beliefs of school employees and the children who attend them, strengthening internal communication and power arrangements, and connecting the school to the needs, interests, and values of the subjects being served. The guidebook is divided into three parts that address these areas specifically. Part 1 familiarizes readers with a new belief system and six actions that allow officials to lead with the new belief system, including taking action, using intuition and faith, inventing and employing ritual, exercising charisma, drawing on networks, and being defiant. Part 2 lays out the wiring fundamentals, followed by means to rewire a school. Part 3 notes the challenges involved and offers ideas about meeting those challenges. (Contains 135 references, a glossary, and an index.) (JMD)

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